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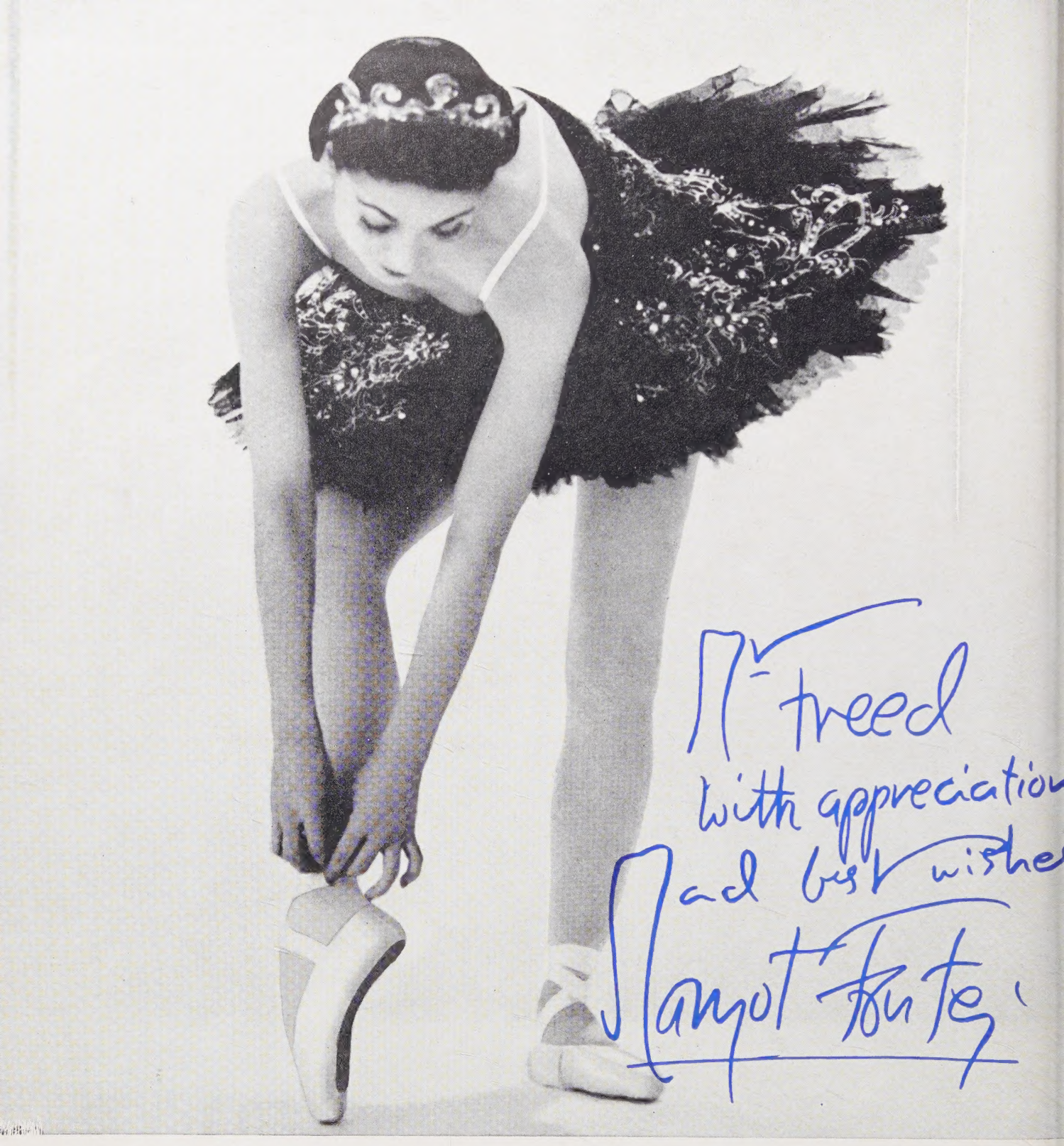

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Cover Portrait
CHRYSTL ZIMMERL
Star of the Vienna Staatsoper, which re-opens this month.

Exclusive Ballet Today photograph by Mike Davis.

opposite

ULANOVA

whose life story will commence in our "Famous Ballerina Series" December issue.

BALLET MONTH

A. V. COTON

THE visit of the Azuma Kabuki troupe to Edinburgh and London provided a unique theatrical occasion; although there were some factors of performance and programme which displeased certain people (many commented on the fact that much of each programme underlined a despair and a morbidity such as certainly exist in the Japanese philosophy) the total effect was of absolute novelty. This was, quite simply, because we saw a form of Theatre which has not yet become fully compartmented in the manner of the European Theatre; in Japan the appeal of the Theatre, whether for tragedy, comedy or lyric performance, lies in its merging of *all* the arts and crafts that form the material of the actor's, the director's and the dramatist's work.

We have grown up in a society which firmly separated the three main divisions of Drama, Opera, Ballet, several hundred years ago; for in spite of the fact that some productions do blend opera and ballet, or that spectacular plays contain some elements of music and dance, in general we Europeans have shaped our Theatre so that it exists in three or more watertight compartments. Many people passionately keen on Drama will never go to Opera and Ballet—and they will never find themselves looking at Opera or Ballet by accident, for their kind of Theatre keeps itself to itself. (Conversely, of course, we all know the rabid kind of opera-fan and balletomane who wouldn't condescend to listen to either Evans or Ashcroft—for them it would be a waste of time).

In the beginning, and right up to mediaeval times, the European Theatre dealt in spectacles and stories which freely used mime as well as acting, dance as well as gesture, music as well as poetry. If the Japanese visit (and the forthcoming one by the Chinese Classical Theatre) does nothing else, it will have wakened many theatregoers to the fact that our Theatre has lost a lot of its vitality in recent years through this excessive specialisation. There are also signs (for those who will trouble to read them) that the Theatre has ceased, in our civilisation, to be the major art it certainly was originally; possibly a return to the "all-in" Theatre, where performers could use all the resources inside one performance, would offer that incentive to dramatists that is so obviously lacking today.

By one of those incalculable errors of booking—from which no-one will suffer but commercial managements and impresarios—a long period has begun wherein no big-scale Ballet or other dance attraction can be seen in London. With the two Sadler's Wells Companies, the Ballet Rambert, and Festival Ballet on tour, nothing appears in London until the New Year, except the promised Spanish and Russian troupes—in, respectively, late October and mid-November. An exception was the two-performance appearance of a group of dancers, part professional and part (apparently) apprentice, presented by the London Ballet Circle and directed by Miss Kathleen Crofton. At the Fortune Theatre on 30th September and 1st October they gave a reconstruction of part of a 19th century romantic-theme ballet, *The Magic Flute* (nothing to do with Mozart), followed by short works by Rupert Doone, John Cranko, and Peter Darrell. Mr. Darrell's work *The Gift* didn't tell quite clearly enough the involved relationships between two parents and a child, though the theme (of parental struggles to win the larger share of the child's love) could have been wonderfully illuminated by more carefully thought-out choreography; Julia Farron seemed most at ease, in the role of the Mother, amongst a cast most of whom could dance but not act.

Mr. Doone's essay *The Circle* was a protracted *pas-de-deux* in which the couple seemed to be revealing most of the dark secrets of their subconscious selves—which wouldn't matter in the least if this gave opportunity for clear, meaningful, possibly beautiful. dancing.

Cranko's two works had the customary air of competence and novelty that he usually gives to his ballets; they need to be looked into (as well as *at*) if we are to find what he is trying to express through his dance-patterns. Both were supposedly "abstract", *i.e.*, simply patterns of dance or movement or body-shapes offered for their visual rather than their dramatic appeal. The disquieting thing about so much "younger-generation-choreography" in Great Britain today is its use of movements which properly belong to the masseur's couch, the operating table, the bathroom, and the marriage bed. No-one is being squeamish, but it needs to be said that if male choreographers wish to express their contempt (*i.e.*, fear) of the female, this is not done suitably by putting a group of female dancers in a public performance through a series of movements and gestures all of which reveal the choreographer's desire to make women (*any* women, *all* women) look contemptible, ridiculous, shameful. This process isn't really justified even when the movements have some aesthetic novelty (which was not the case here); even the best of this kind of choreography—Roland Petit's ballets of 1946/49—suffered artistically through the determination to show us the physical facts lying beneath the glamour of the female sex. If this sort of thing were offered in a revue, an opera or a play, the Lord Chamberlain would undoubtedly refuse to licence the work.

One breathed an air slightly more refreshing during a comparatively obscure occasion on 5th October, when at the first winter ball of the Anglo Continental Club, two groups of foreigners resident in this country showed their native dances. The outstanding event was a group of rare Ukrainean dances unlike any seen before in London at professional performances. The troupe are the Dance Group of the Ukrainean Asscciation located in Reading; these nationals try to keep their own culture alive by maintaining the use of the language, costume, native festivals, etc., Four males—and what *males* !—danced a 15th century sword-dance, weaving in and out of circles and squares, and making formal fighting strokes with the naked, real swords they carried. Then four couples performed the kind of "show off" dance that peasants still keep alive in most countries, a kind of flirtation routine with each person showing off his or her dance skill, between the main pattern of linked circle and double-file movements. Finally three men gave a brilliant performance of a "zaporoze zadunaya", which is mainly based on those single turns, cabrioles, hand-on-floor spins, such as form the basis of the Three Ivans choreography in *The Sleeping Beauty*; and in quality it came up to many performances of Slav-peasant-type choreography given by professionals. Some adventurous ballet association should hunt up this and similar groups of European exiles, and organise a full bill of pure national dances, as given by the only people who really know how to perform them—*i.e.*, the natives who were brought up in the appropriate region and the correct culture.

* * *

THE Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet premiered Alfred Rodrigues' *Saudades* (Nostalgia) at Liverpool on October 13th. Its theme is of the purest Romantic origin for the story directly reflects (though this is not mentioned in the programme note) a famous Heine poem. In that lyric the poet contrasts the fate of the pinetree in its cold northern solitude, with that of the palm, equally alone, in its desert of burning stone. In the ballet a conquering king returns with a captive princess from the North, but she rejects the exotic luxury of his Court and languishes for the snow-laden landscape of her home. During her illness, on a Spring day, the almond trees suddenly burst into blossom and she is enchanted by their beauty, finding that their perfume and their whiteness resemble those of the snows she longs for; at last she is happy.

The lyric possibilities were not very fully exploited; the choreography too restless in the ensembles, which employed too vast a regiment of slave girls, warriors and Court attendants. The Sorceress and Two Astrologers seemed unnecessary to the plot and a character described as a Eunuch provided one of the most tasteless pieces of costuming and one of the most inept passages of acting I've seen in many a long day. Best of all was a long but finely proportioned *pas-de-deux* for King and Princess (Donald Macleary and Maureen Bruce) in which Rodrigues showed more invention than in any one passage in all his previous ballets. Norman Adams' decor—a riot of undisciplined, and unstylised, red and pink shapes, missed fire altogether—though some of his female costumes were acceptable. Dennis Apivor's score started well then wandered into a maze of echoes and paraphrases of a dozen other balletic composers. The entire ballet could have been vastly improved if some informed and fairly ruthless discipline had been imposed on the three collaborators by someone aware of the meaning of the phrase, "artistic direction".

VENICE ★ The Opera Ballet of Paris ★

THE 18th International Festival of Contemporary Music given at the Fenice Opera House between the 11th and 28th September included performances by the above named organisation which presented four works, three of them being seen for the first time. It should be stressed at the outset that the extremely misleading title of this troupe implies absolutely no connection with the Paris Grand Opera Ballet, of which Serge Lifar is the artistic director. This Opera-Ballet of Paris has Marie Férès as director, and is an organisation of comparatively recent origin.

A programme note endeavoured to justify the *simultaneous* presentation of Opera and Ballet by recalling the performance of similar works during the "18th century", which "justified the return to a theatrical form which the 19th century had curiously despised". A little research, however, into the history of Ballet shows such a premise as entirely inadmissible because, whilst sung recitatives were introduced into ballets during the 17th (not the 18th) century, the great reform of ballet during the 18th century did away with recitatives and replaced them with the "drama-ballet-pantomime", to use the term accorded it by Noverre. In any case these sung recitatives did not accompany the dances, but always preceded them in explanation of what was to follow A very different state of affairs, obviously, to that of combined opera and ballet, where the one art merely gets in the way of the other.

Commenting on the fact that the majority of theatres nowadays only produce modern works with extreme caution, whereby the younger school of contemporary composers would lose interest and enthusiasm unless a special art medium, that of "Ballet-Opera", were created for them, Maria Férès manifests her ideas of how Ballet-Opera should be modelled in the following preface :

"The Opera-Ballet ought to move with the times. Each work should be very short, very worked out, with quickly changing situations surcharged with expression. They should be given in groups of three or four during the evening in order to produce ever changing emotions in the audience."

The omission here of reference to beauty (in any form) is significant; so many other factors have priority.

The subject for the first work *The Kingdom of the Comet* was derived by Maria Férès from two pictures by J. J. Grandville, Choreography by Maurice Bejart, and music by Marcel Delannoy. Scenario: In his delirium a young poet imagines himself to be in love with a comet. Despite the amorous approaches of other stars, he persists in his courtship of the comet until, coming in contact with it, he tears off its tail and is killed. Unfortunately, the comet was impersonated by a completely static figure and provided with words sung by Maria Férès. Three other parts representing Nebulose were also sung. Thus one's attention was perpetually distracted and divided between looking at the poet dancing and the comet and assistant nebulae singing.

Moreover, nothing more contradictory than a static comet can be imagined, especially as all the other stars danced with considerable élan and rapidity. The music, though with moments of lyrical charm, was better suited to the singers than the dancers, yet the singing was at all times below operatic standards. The dancers, on the other hand, and especially the poet, were good.

The next piece, *Picture of St. Michael* with libretto by Maria Férès, choreography by Dick Sanders, music by Marius Constant, and concrete music by Pierre Henry, amounted to an ultra-modern hotted-up equivalent of the Faust legend.

The rival teams, St. Michael and his angels on the one side of the ring, Lucifer and his demons on the other, dispute for possession of the flower of life (symbol of creation). The young man, to whom the flower has been given by his fiancée, succumbs to the powers of evil, who wrest the flower from him. The girl, bereft of her partner, dies, and her spirit implores St. Michael to save the soul of her beloved. St. Michael and his angels overcome the Devil in combat, and restore the flower to the young man, who, in death, is re-united to his love.

Were it not for the hideous, bogus, and completely unnecessary sports costumes of the rival teams, the somewhat superfluous speaker (Paul Derenne) who declaimed in the manner of a compère at the Folies Bergères, the concrete music which, effective for a moment, soon resembled nothing so much as clashing cutlery, this piece might have succeeded. For the most part the mistake of simultaneous dancing and singing was not made; the singers merely prefaced the action, or commented on it. Maurice Bejart as the young man gave an outstanding moving performance, his amazing suppleness allied to extraordinary miming powers providing an unforgettable experience. Sonia Millian as the fiancée, and Elisabette Hermansen as the temptress, also revealed strong personalities coupled with brilliant technique.

The third piece *Armida*—with libretto by Maria Férès, music by Maurice Jarre and choreography by Ottavio Cintolesi, notwithstanding a lurid atmosphere rather too redolent of Grand Guignol, produced a really excellent and thrilling pas de deux by Tessa Beaumont (the servant) and Vassily Sulich (the soldier). These brilliant young dancers, and the same applied to the others, deserve to be seen in ballets unimpeded by third rate singers. Of Maria Férès as Armida it is enough to say that this undoubtedly talented and creative artist should confine herself to miming the role and not attempt to sing it. Her voice is both raucous and unnaturally produced. Besides, the piece would benefit enormously if given simply as a ballet d'action. The climax of the pas de deux was completely spoilt by the soldier, as he sees Armida commit suicide, shouting out 'Armida !' at the top of his voice. After all, the audience has some imagination, surely.

As for the last piece *Love and Folly* based on one of La Fontaine's fables, it was so bad and so atrociously sung that the evening's entertainment now sank to the level of some vulgar show at a cafe-concert. The audience, already disappointed and restless, gradually began to leave the theatre, whilst throughout the performance, which was quite long, protests and whistling were heard coming from all directions. It would be kinder to draw a veil over such incidents, yet, at the same time, it is absolutely necessary and a duty, to bring home forcibly to the production committee of the International Festivals (1) that the Fenice Opera House is not the place in which to stage experiments that amount to an insult to the intelligence of the public, and (2) that experiments of this kind can in any case only prove a major disservice to the interests of modern Art.

Robert Paterson

CHICAGO ★ Summer Season ★

THE total artistic impression of the myriad and almost countless ways in which dance was employed during the past summer in open-air performances of musicals, operettas, pageants and plays, was minor compared to the effect of two indoor presentations: Vashi and Veena's *Dances of India* and the Chicago Ballet Guild's *Stars of the Dance.*

Officially opening a University of Chicago conference on India's role in Asia, Vashi and Veena danced various aspects of Indian life. The variety lay within Vashi's range of motion and emotion; as peasant or priest, in boudoir or on battlefield he captured even the nuances of character and situation. Veena flirted deliciously, but her lack of eloquence and grandeur was apparent in roles not calling for coquettish qualities. The problem of adapting the Oriental dances to the conventions of Western theatre was solved by adjusting neo-gothic Mandel Hall's stage to the artistic demands of the performers. This was manoeuvered by the Kozmans, who with the play of coloured lights on simple screens provided a setting which, together with the excellent programme notes, mediated between East and West. Only the musical interludes, not nearly as interesting as those which usually accompany Indian dances, detracted from the evening.

Lack of sustained excellence due to excess brilliance, a common feature of galas, was avoided by the planned variety which Ann Barzel, the producer, introduced into *Stars of the Dance.* Since many of the participants were employed at theatres, the performance could not begin until 11.30 p.m., when the regular entertainments had ended. Moreover, the late hour was both the necessity and welcome inspiration for having the gala at a night club, where audience and performers could refresh themselves with food and drink while watching the stage. Curiously, the highlight of the evening, three scenes from Music Theatre's production of *The Golden Apple,* was more opera than ballet, as were also Burr Tillstrom's singing puppets. Among the dance items of distinction were pas de deux and variations from *Raymonda* as performed by tall, elegant ex-Sadler's Wells dancer, Lorna Mossford, and Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo's brilliant Alan Howard; the satiric variations of Ruth Pryor, who thirty years ago was Chicago's first Odette in *Swan Lake* and today is still a 'China doll' dancer with considerable technique; also Ronald Frazier's primitive dance with its *Green Magic* ecstasy. At 2.30 a.m a highly complex but always fluid pas de deux from a new Charles Bockman ballet ended the gala.

George Jackson.

FRANCE

FERDINAND REYNA

THE Ballets Modernes de Paris opened at the Theatre Marigny on 5th September. This Company is directed by two dancers, Françoise and Dominique, who have already combined in productions in Paris and at the Dance Festival at Aix-les-Bains.

There is nothing very new in their presentations. The show has a certain flavour, the costumes are pretty and the music well chosen. Darius Milhaud, Jean-Michel Damase, Bela Bartok, etc: . . . . Some numbers in the programme, like *Paso* (music by Maurice Ohanna) and *Suite Française* (Darius Milhaud) are built around the movements which Agnes de Mille used in some of her Ballets in the American folklore style. There is only one real dancer in the whole group—the English girl Gayle Spear, who dances very well in Bela Bartok's *Concertino*, set to a little piece of choreography by Igor Fosco.

The Ballets Modernes de Paris showed us nothing new; we already know Gayle Spear, and it was a pleasure to see her again.

* * *

The Ballets de la Tour Eiffel, the last-born of French Companies, opened at the Theatre des Champs Elysées on 7th September. Josette Clavier who was only yesterday première danseuse at the Theatre National de l'Opera, and Pierre Lacotte, premier danseur at the Opera, are the stars of the troupe whose ballet-master is young Dick Sanders. The rest of the troupe consists of Lena Skerla, Olga Kostromine, Jocelyne Mercier, Vreni Renouard, Jean Pierre Alban, Arthur Bell and Martin Blair.

The debut of the Ballets de la Tour Eiffel was awaited with interest, but they were frankly disappointing.

Solstice, a one-act ballet—story and choreography by Pierre Lacotte, music by Daniel Wayenberg, scenery and costumes by Pierre Clayette, belongs to that category of ballets which set out to express the joy and life-force of youth. Unfortunately it drags on indefinitely, and the pas-de-deux by Clavier and Lacotte is, frankly, a flop. In this ballet there are reminiscences of Agnes de Mille, of Jerome Robbins and even of Roland Petit, but the whole thing is monotonous and without sparkle.

Night is a Witch—also by Pierre Lacotte, with a score by the jazz soloist Sidney Bechet and scenery by Bernard Daydé, takes us into a barn where we find the three principal protagonists—a sleep-walker (Pierre Lacotte), his young fiancée (Josette Clavier) and his black servant (Arthur Bell).

The sleep-walker, the programme tells us, represents a being deprived of his senses, who can only be drawn out of his torpor by memories of childhood. But his father and mother misuse these means, and liberate reflexes in him which express themselves in cruel, inhuman actions. These actions loose the passions of the black servant, who also gives himself over to fury.

There is some eroticism and some psychology in this ballet, but little dancing; the whole thing is cold and does not succeed either in bothering or moving us.

Pierre Lacotte did a little better in *Gosse de Paris*, with a score by the popular composer Charles Aznavour. This romantic ballet tells the story of a young bird-seller (Josette Clavier) whose favourite bird is stolen from her by a young man (Dick Sanders). But he brings it back in the end, and the two fall in love.

These three ballets are, for the moment, the whole repertory of this Company which the Director Pierre Lacotte seems to have wanted to embark on very modern lines. The result, as we have said, is a very moderate success.

* * *

Jacques Ibert, the famous composer, who has for several years been Director of the Academie de France at the Villa Medicis in Rome, has been recalled to take over direction of the National Lyric Theatre of France. Among Jacques Ibert's works we may recall *Diane de Poitiers*', a ballet which was given by Ida Rubinstein's Company, and *Le Chevalier Errant* a great ballet which was presented a few years ago at the Opera with choreography by Serge Lifar.

Among Jacques Ibert's projects for Ballet at the Opera, we may mention a repeat of *Noces Fantastiques* by Marcel Delannoy; a presentation of a ballet by Georges Auric *Les Chemins de la Lumière* whose choreography may be entrusted to the Hungarian choreographer Aurel Millosz. Harald Lander will set a ballet to Bela Bartok's *Concerto pour Orchestre*. A scheme to present Prokofiev's *Juliette et Romeo*, with cuts in the score by Serge Lifar, has been submitted for the approval of the composer's heirs.

Finally, Harald Lander and Serge Peretti are going to take over the direction of the Dancing School of the Opera, replacing Albert Aveline and Carlotta Zambelli who have reached retiring age.

JEAN COQUELLE

Gilberte Cournand presents
LUDMILLA TCHERINA—

THE Place Dauphine is a sweet oasis in the middle of old Paris; and in it the Library 'La Danse' offers to balletomanes a constant flow of things to admire. Madame Gilberte Cournand heaps up treasures there; rare books, precious statuettes of ballerinas, drawings, paintings, personal mementoes of dead artists, everything to perpetuate remembrances of the fugitive art of the Dance.

Every year, Serge Lido comes there to sign his albums of photographs; and every year, Mme. Cournand presents important shows of something to do with choreographic art.

This time, she has elected to astonish, as well as to please us, by presenting Ludmilla Tcherina, no longer as a ballerina or as a comedienne, but as a painter . . . . and she shows us the strange pictures of this new master of the brush.

Pictures of whirling eroticism, hinting at a connection between the most ordinary pas de deux and the most tortured sexuality, with vibrating colour which reminds one of the conceptions of Dali.

The originality of the poses and the invention in the lines show us, perhaps, a new side of Ludmilla Tcherina; when shall we see Tcherina *the* choreographer ?

Ludmilla Tcherina, ballerina and painter.
Photo : J. L. Chardans, Paris.

Pilgrimage to Venice

At the tomb of Diaghilev in the cemetery of San Michele, Venice. On the left of the picture is Signora Alessandri standing next to Serge Lifar. Pupils of the school are on the right.

ONE of the loveliest days in Venice this year was the 19th of August, with the town so packed with visitors (many of them no doubt balletomanes) that at various points it was impossible to move other than at a snail's pace. Yet, over on the island of San Michele where Sergei Diaghilev lies buried, the day being the 26th anniversary of his death, no-one was to be seen except a few Venetians bringing flowers in memory of their dear ones.

A little later, however, a small procession of eleven people consisting of Signora Turitto Alessandri, eight of her pupils from the Venice School of Classical Dancing, the present writer and his wife, might have been observed wending its way through the monastery cloisters, then on through the lovely cypresses and palm trees which frame and soften the outlines of the cemetery, and finally reaching Diaghilev's grave in the Greek Orthodox section. There Serge Lifar, who has never missed his annual pilgrimage to the tomb of his great compatriot, was waiting with the Greek Priest and his two assistants.

The young pupils, having laid their lovely flowers at the foot of the tomb, stepped back and then formed a semi-circle around the priest, who thereupon commenced to chant the requiem in an oriental mode, to which the acolytes softly responded.

Again, in this unusual setting, could be felt that mysterious affinity between Venice and the East, no doubt a cogent enough reason for Diaghilev's great love for the town that was to afford his last resting place. The ceremony could not have lasted for more than about eight minutes, yet so strong was the spiritual power surrounding us that, when the chanting ceased, it seemed almost as though we had passed from one life—to begin another. On this occasion Lifar delivered no oration, he merely turned to the young dancers and told them not to feel sad but to rejoice, because they had been called to continue Diaghilev's task, here in Italy. Then, turning once more to the tomb, he uttered the words "Adieu, grand maître" and smilingly intimated that the ceremony was finished.

We returned the way we had set out, and, as we emerged from the cemetery, I could not but ask myself whether it is too much to hope that every young dancer will try to make this pilgrimage at least once, and to derive humility and devotion to the great art of Ballet. For, at Diaghilev's tomb is where both are to be found.

Robert Paterson.

The Munich Festival

THE Munich State Opera under the artistic direction of Professor Rudolf Hartmann, celebrated its fifth annual music festival since the end of the war. Mainly specializing in operas these festivals are gaining more and more in importance through the concentration on the works of Richard Strauss.

Included in this year's production were *Elektra*, *Ariadne*, *Arabella*, all attracting an audience of international globetrotters from Europe and abroad.

It is to be regretted that in this great exhibition of theatrical arts only three evenings were devoted to ballet. The main point of interest was focused on the première of *Flight of the Doves* (Taubenflug)—libretto: O. F. Regner; music: Otto Erich Schilling—this being the first ballet of German origin in the repertory of seven works established by Alan Carter during his year's stay in the Bavarian capital. Unfortunately the performances took place on the small stage of the Theater am Gaertnerplatz, where the lighter muse of the traditional operetta is wont to amuse a more conventionalized audience, so that the choreography was cramped for space. However this was not the only reason for this more or less harmless ballet's incomplete success.

The libretto presented the choreographer with the problem of uniting three completely disconnected episodes, attempting to concentrate the poetical quality of the dove in mythology, folklore, and 'private life'. This mixture of the dove as such and as a symbol makes for natural confusion. In the bird-like movements of the opening scene the grotesque talent of Elfi Weber stood out. The second scene dealt as a vehicle for Veronica Mlakar and Heino Hallhuber in a nine-minute love duet as Aphrodite and Adonis. Here Carter demonstrated again his special talent for using children as a positive element on the stage. Little Bika Nitschkoff, Carter's own discovery, danced the turtledove with such a child-like naturalness and charm in her clean classical patterns that for once it was not embarrassing to see a child prancing about in tutu and toe slippers. The work reaches its climax in a peasant festival, for which Schilling has composed a vivacious folksy score, wittily instrumented, and fully successful in its intention.

To the prepared German onlooker who is not yet at home in ballet terminology, the abstract beauty of Carter's second Festival contribution *Concertino* comes as a surprise. To the music of the Italian composer G. B. Pergolesi (born 1710) Carter has designed a non-story-ballet that would delight Balanchine. Geometrical groupings; movement counterpointing music in eight different variations, andante, presto, adagio, etc., strictly classical arrangements dominated by the classical line; a sharply outlined painting in music and movement which does not lose its colours in repeated viewing.

One looks forward to Carter's Christmas contribution, a ballet arrangement of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* which is to be based on music by Hindemith.

Axel Kaun.

Dancer's Viewpoint

WHAT ABOUT THESE GUEST STARS?

Do they cause dissention amongst the permanent members of the Company? Do they fit in easily? These are questions we have all asked at some time. This article gives us a glimpse into the world of the dancer and a dancer's point of view.

QUITE often the question arises when discussing ballet in general and ballet companies in particular as to the value of the much touted "guest star". Most ballet organizations have occasional guest dancers and some like the Festival Ballet or the Marquis de Cuevas Company absolutely glory in them. Are they an asset to a company or is it mostly a case of "here today, gone tomorrow"?

From the point of view of the paying public it is certainly an added attraction to the evening's entertainment. To have the opportunity of seeing Markova or Chauviré dance a guest *Giselle* is a treat at any time but more so when the ballerina in question is not attached to any particular Company, and may not be seen again for a number of years, as was the case with Danilova who danced in London for the first time in four years at the Festival Hall this summer. Whether she will return again is a matter for speculation, but in the meantime many many people have been given the opportunity of seeing a great dancer in her finest roles.

But now, what about the dancer's point of view? Does the appearance on the scene of a guest dancer cause any dissention in the Company? Does not the fact that a visiting ballerina may turn a Company topsy turvy for a few days enter into it? Having danced with the Festival Ballet for a number of years and watched numerous guest artists rehearse their roles and perform them, I think the answer can honestly be given as NO.

Markova, Chauviré, Danilova, Toumanova, Shearer, Slavenska, Riabouchinska, Tcherina, Belita, etc. have all been guests with the Company at one time or another and all have left behind wonderful memories as artists who knew their jobs and worked hard at doing their work well.

Tamara Toumanova with Mamma, of course, were with the Company at the Stoll Theatre in 1952 and recently accompanied us on our first American tour. The Company's memories of Toumanova are not all concerned with performances. We are more apt to think of her sipping a coke in the wings or talking food and recipes on a train call. Her knowledge of salamis would delight an epicure.

Nora Kovach and Istvan Rabovsky on the same tour were as much members of the Company as many dancers who have been with Festival Ballet since its inception. During performance they managed to bring a vivid excitement to the aged and creaky *Scheherazade* which in this era of ultra modern dance dramas is quite an accomplishment. "Pishta," as Rabovsky is called by his wife, may cause a furore on the stage with his extraordinary technique, but when the curtain came down he was possibly the quietest member of the group. Not seen at a single party or reception during the entire five months of the tour, he still managed to win the respect and the friendship of all.

Alexandra Danilova the last ballerina to be a guest with the Company joined us for the Spanish season at the Liceo Opera House in Barcelona. With her partner Michael Maule she fitted in as easily as if she had been with us for years. It might surprise a goodly portion of the audiences who watched her perform to know that she was dancing under possibly the worst of conditions. Any visitor to Spain will know what the sudden change of food can do to even the strongest of stomachs. To appear on the huge Liceo stage as the gayest of street dancers in *Beau Danube* gives witness to Danilova's pluck and courage. During morning classes, which she generously gave, there was always a word of encouragement given with her knowledgeable corrections. Some of Danilova's rather Dorothy Parkerish remarks made during class and at rehearsals would I am sure make excellent revue material.

Anton Dolin in going to the trouble of presenting these great dancers is doing not only the ballet public a great service, but is also seeing that today's dancers have the opportunity of working with and learning from thme. More often than not a dancer in a Company has less chance of witnessing performances by other Companies and groups than has the general public. Anyone therefore who makes it possible for them to see and study the great performances of today is to be warmly congratulated.

Yes, keep the guests coming by all means. We love them . . .

Jon J. Waks
with Festival Ballet

Danilova

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MUSICIAN AT THE BALLET

BY MONTAGUE CALMAN

THE LOST CHORD

LET me tell you a story. Long, long ago, there was a man who played his cello. His technique was different from his fellow cellists. Instead of producing sonorous cadences of sound he was content to play steadily on one mellow note. His wife, a patient creature, endured this monotony for several years, until at last she spoke up. "I have noticed," she said, "that when other men play the cello they frequently play many notes in rapid succession, and produce a pleasant flow of melody. How is it, then, that you are content to play just one single note?" Her husband replied: "Woman, what you say is quite true. These other men are still searching for the right note. I have long since found it."

At the Royal Opera House recently I felt like the wife in the story as I sat through the performances by the Azuma Kabuki Dancers and Musicians. Perhaps I was still looking for something; maybe the Japanese had found it.

KABUKI BIRTH

It all started a thousand years ago in Kyoto, then the capital of Japan. A temple virgin named O'Kuni, in the service of the Izumo Shrine, performed a special religious dance. Ambitious like most Japanese, she later decided to commercialise her art and found some backers among the businessmen and merchants of Oseka. Gradually her dances were developed by various schools through the ages until some six hundred years later the Kabuki was formed. The Kabuki itself is now some four hundred years old.

The Japanese tell me that music plays a vital part in their Kabuki. They have used the sounds of various composers including Gidayu, Nagauta, Tokiazu and Kiyomoto. I say sounds rather than music because to the Western ears it is all rather bewildering and unlike any music we have ever heard, from either East or West. As the Japanese have no musical scores or notation for these sounds, the instruments and ballads are played and sung by ear.

Feudal Age instruments are used in the Kabuki, while the musicians themselves wear the magnificent formal attire of the Samurai class of the same period. Their major instrument is the three-stringed samisen, a mandolin type of sound producer with a restricted melodic line. For the present Azuma Kabuki season at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, the samisens were accompanied by a Japanese flute with a characteristic shrieking pitch. This is quite uncanny to listen to. Stick and hand drums completed the percussion section.

The evening opened quite musically with the resident members of the Royal Opera House Orchestra down in the pit playing the Japanese national anthem. It sounded very much like the opening chorus from *The Mikado*. After this the resident orchestra departed and our ties with the West were severed.

THEIR PROGRAMME

Sambaso (Offering to the Gods) was the first item and sounded to unaccustomed ears like an early sequence of an old fashioned travelogue. You know the type of noise: wild birds twittering, hyenas swooping, and the snarls and trumpeting of wild animals. Then for *Shakkyo* (Lion Dance) the ballad was given more in the style of a Flamenco singer, accompanied by what sounded like a goods train shunting outside a busy Arab bazaar.

Dojoji (The Dancing Girl at the Dojoji Temple) is considered by my Japanese friends to be the most famous of the Kabuki dances. Here we had gutteral abdominal wails and queer gargling cries from the singers. To the Western ear this type of sound startles as much as anything, although the samisen wove a web of throbbing intensity as it accompanied the voices. Gradually I was hypnotically fascinated.

There was a distinctive charm in *Fukitori-Tsuma* (The Would-Be Flute Player Seeks a Wife) when the flute managed a bagpipe wail which recalled my army days with the Highland Division.

The vocal refrain for *Tsuchi-gumo* (The Dance of the Spider) seemed to me similar to a discord of Muslim Muezzins calling the Faithful to prayer. The opening orchestral bars of *O-Matsuri No Hi* (Festival Day) were as if a wife threw curtain rings across a room, her husband bashed away at the dinner gong and junior kept his finger on the door bell.

SUPERB SOLOIST

For me as a writer on music there was especial interest in the orchestral item *Tak* (The Waterfalls), yet this too was a discordant collection of noises. But I was patient, and was rewarded. For this led to a fascinating display of virtuoso koto playing by Shinichi Yuize. In sound the koto is an odd cross breed between a cimbalon, harp and zither. Producing a resonant tone, the koto gave us musical excitement even though it sounded more like Debussy than Japanese Kabuki. Sad to relate this remarkably captivating artist, Shinichi Yuize, only appeared for three minutes in the seventy minutes of actual Kabuki performance A great pity as this was truly enchanting.

ART OR RELIGION ?

On two viewings of this entertainment as far as I am concerned Kabuki is a religion of musical and theatrical presentation. I believe that unless you are a member of the creed it is impossible to gauge its true value. I could be arty and crafty like many of the elegant first-nighters at the Royal Opera House. I could bandy words of Kabuki significance. But I would not try to fool you. The Kabuki should be seen wherever it visits England because it is unusual, but like most primitive things it is beyond the comprehension of the Western developed mind. I am told that the Azuma Kabuki, as we have seen it, is in its simplified form for the ordinary man in the Japanese street. For me it lacks the authentic cultural value of its Indian counterpart. It would be wrong not to pay tribute though to the perfection in presentation and the superb style of the sumptuous costumes. But my approach here is as a musician.

Frankly I believe that the Japanese have adapted morsels from Asiatic and Pacific cultures and then complicated the issue, for me, by shrouding the resulting Kabuki with a religious aura. A book given to me by the ever helpful Attaché at the Japanese Embassy in London says "Kabuki plays are difficult to understand."

You see what I mean about the Lost Chord now ?

NEXT MONTH:—

Montague Calman will review the whole year's work in a special feature entitled Music and Musicians of 1955.

I attended a reception given by the Japanese Ambassador to meet the Azuma Kabuki Dancers and Musicians.

Although traditional Japanese dress was worn, the men told me that they prefer their wives to dress in Western style because Japanese attire takes too long and the wives agree with them, saying they also found it more comfortable. Both men and women look much younger than they are, especially **Tokuho Azuma**, the head of the Company. As she stood side by side with her beautiful seventeen year old daughter, it would have been easier to believe they were sisters.

Madame Azuma told me that she liked English audiences and felt that, already, they were beginning to understand the art of **Kabuki.** She hoped to return to England in the very near future.

Members of the Company said they had visited Westminster Abbey and other places of interest, and were very impressed with what they had seen in England. Their one regret—they could not attend a performance by the Sadler's Wells Company at Covent Garden.

Articles and reviews in BALLET TODAY are to be translated and sent to Japan.

DAPHNE Dale has left Festival Ballet, but will return for their Monte Carlo season. She is to spend two months with her parents in Kenya and is taking her husband **Nicolai Polajenko** to meet them for the first time.

This means that as Festival Ballet enter their seventh year only six of the founder members remain in the company.

FLEMMING Flindt of the Royal Danish Ballet has joined Festival Ballet now on their provincial tour.

From John O'Brien

BALLET Guild of Australia, under the extremely competent direction of **Laurel Martyn**, has formed itself into a professional company. This group must be congratulated for its excellent work over the past ten years. During this period it has presented many new works by local choreographers, as well as works by guest choreographers such as **Margaret Scott** and **Walter Gore**, and some tasteful revivals of the classics. Their tour of New South Wales and Southern Queensland begins very shortly.

FOR Better for Worse a comedy by **Arthur Watkyn,** is being presented at the Scala Theatre on Tuesday 29th November by the Stock Exchange Dramatic and Operatic Society in aid of the National Television Fund. The purpose of the fund is to create resources from which grants may be made for the provision of television sets to hospitals and similar places where men, women and children are confined for long periods. Tickets at prices ranging from 25s. to 2s. 6d., or donations to the fund, should be sent to Chairman of the Advisory Committee, **Miss Mary Malcolm,** National Television Fund, 12, Whitehall, London, S.W.1.

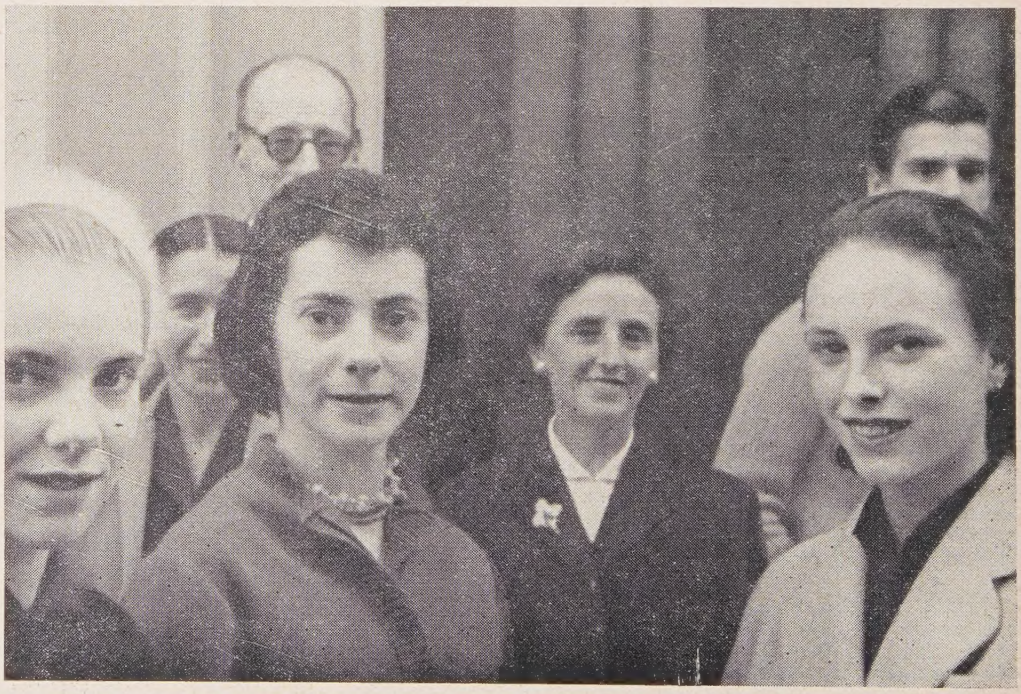
A series of twenty-four Lecture-Demonstrations on Dancing are to be presented at the Adult Centre, 15a New Road Avenue, Chatham, by **Miss Trixie Hallawell,** M.I.S.T.D. (G.D.A. branch) on Tuesday evenings from 7.0 to 9.0 p.m. The programme of the first series of twelve, which commenced on 27th September, present ballet as viewed from many angles. November lectures will include Ballet as the "poet", the "actor", the "historian", the "folklorist" and the "film producer" see it.

ALICIA Markova was invited to Copenhagen on September 23rd and 25th to dance *Giselle* with the Royal Danish Ballet, the first foreign ballerina to appear as Guest with the Danish Company in their own Ballet. She restaged *Giselle* for the Company and was partnered by **Eric Bruhn.**

A special Danish T.V. programme followed on September 29th, to honour the opening of the British Trade Fair, when **Markova** was interviewed on the close link between British and Danish Ballet. **Markova** stayed on in Copenhagen for this transmission as a gesture for Danish television, and danced a pas de deux from *Giselle* with **Eric Bruhn** to show audiences what a perfect medium television can be for Ballet. **Markova** has a huge Television public here in Britain and also in the U.S.A. where her appearances are seen by 60,000,000 people.

In our concluding chapter of the Markova Story in this issue we call her "the ballerina who can never keep still". This is no misnomer, for from Copenhagen **Markova** flies to Paris to appear as Guest with the de Cuevas Ballet for their autumn Season, and from there to Chicago as Guest with the Opera Season in November, creating the title role in the Ballet *Merry Widow*, and dancing for the first time the part of Leonora in *Revenge* both ballets by **Ruth Page.**

Taken outside the Opera House, Covent Garden. *Photo: Mike Davis*
Members of the corps de ballet await conveyance to the airport en route for their American tour.



BACKSTAGE CAMERA

To be a ballerina means hard work. Svetlana Beriosova rehearsing Sleeping Beauty—Rose Adagio—*with her partner John Field. Taken at Covent Garden just before the Company left for their U.S.A. tour.* *Photos : Mike Davis*

THE ALICIA

COVENT GARDEN

IN 1953 Alicia Markova returned to England to dance again with the Sadler's Wells Company at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. She was to dance *Giselle* and *Swan Lake Act II* with Michael Somes, besides appearing in *Les Sylphides*. Her return to Covent Garden seemed to have a profound effect on the members of the resident company, for their productions took on a new lease of life, which was undoubtedly due to the brilliance of her dancing. At the end of the season, she went on a short concert tour with Michael Somes. One of the highlights of the tour was *Bolero* 1830, which had been choreographed for her by Ana Ricarda. In this classical bolero, with its red, gold and white costume, Markova scored an instant success both with the public and the press.

After her concert tour, Markova left for Paris, to dance for the first time since the outbreak of war, in *Giselle*, but this time she was dancing with the Ballet Theatre. From Paris to Winnipeg and back to the United States, where in the gigantic open-air stadium in Philadelphia, she danced with Oleg Tupine in a concert programme. On her return to New York, Markova made her initial appearance of the season in *The Show of Shows*, one of the most important and highly paid programmes in the whole of the American television network. She danced a short solo, *Autumn*, which was devised for her by Bronislava Nijinska.

PARIS

In November she left again for Paris, to accept an engagement to appear as guest ballerina with the company of the Marquis de Quevas. She was to dance in *Pas de Quatre* with Rosella Hightower, Denise Bourgeois and Jacqueline Moreau, besides making her customary and almost legendary appearances in *Giselle*, which had been so well received earlier in the year.

AMERICA

The following month she flew back to America, fresh from her European triumphs, for, earlier in the year she had been contracted to appear at the Metropolitan Opera House in the principal Balletic role, in the second act of the opera *Fledermaus*. Zachary Solov was responsible for the choreography. In the dance excerpts she was partnered by Roland Vasquez. On January 2nd, Markova made another appearance in *The Show of Shows*, this time in the solo, *Snowflakes*. Then she made another visit to London to dance with the de Quevas company at the Stoll Theatre; but her stay was not destined to be a long one for in February she was back in America, dancing as guest artiste with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet in Washington, in a repertoire consisting of *The Dying Swan*, and *Les Sylphides*.

THE ALBERT HALL

In fact during this period, she might well have been termed the 'Ballerina, who could never keep still', for by April she had flown back to London. Whilst in London she danced at the Royal Albert Hall. Her partner was Milorad Miskovitch, the young Yugoslavian dancer. She appeared in excerpts from *Les Sylphides*, *Bolero* 1830, in Nijinsky's *Prelude a l'Apres-Midi d'un Faune*, in Fokine's *Dying Swan*, and finally in the pas de deux from the *Nutcracker Suite*. The concert was an outstanding success, the Albert Hall being packed with a highly enthusiastic audience. A short provincial tour followed in which she and Miskovitch visited Dublin, Bristol, Brighton and Liverpool. Besides a short tour of Portugal with Alexis Rassine as her partner, Markova returned to America to dance with Miskovitch again in Los Angeles.

FESTIVAL HALL

In December 1954, Alicia again returned to London to appear at the Festival Hall; not with Anton Dolin's Festival Ballet, but in the annual production of *Where the Rainbow Ends*, in which Dolin himself appeared as Saint George. John Taras had arranged for her as The Spirit of the Lake, a most attractive ballet, set to one of the movements of Tchaikovsky's First Symphony. Although the ballet excerpts were only very brief, Taras had conceived the original idea of supplying her with two partners, Veit Bethke and Malcolm Goddard. In his own essentially modern style Taras had provided a most satisfying romantic dance, which ideally contrasted the scenes devoted to Saint George and the Dragon-King.

METROPOLITAN NEW YORK

After her season at the Festival Hall, and a well-earned holiday in the Bahamas, Alicia flew back to New York to begin preparations and rehearsals for her forthcoming appearances in *Orpheus and Eurydice*, at the Metropolitan Opera House. Zachary Solov was responsible for the choreography. Markova as the Blessed Spirit in the Elysian Fields Scene in the second act of the opera, with a Greek costume and hair in the Greek style, provided one of the most important balletic events in the New York Calendar. In a true lyric dance with long flowing arm movements, Markova appeared at her most beautiful; incidentally she repeated one of the excerpts from the ballet in a recent

MARKOVA STORY

PART FOUR

television production in this country.

For her next engagement she chose to remain in New York, to dance yet another season with the Ballet Theatre. She was to dance again with Anton Dolin, besides appearing with Tatiana Riabouchinska, Hugh Laing and Mary Ellen Moylan. For the opening performance of the season, she danced in *Les Sylphides*; later in the season she appeared with Igor Youskevitch as Albrecht in *Giselle*, and in Anthony Tudor's *Romeo and Juliet* with Hugh Laing. What was perhaps more significant was the fact that she danced for the first time with Erik Bruhn of the Royal Danish Ballet in *Giselle*. This event was looked forward to with avid anticipation, and will no doubt be remembered as one of the highlights of the season.

DENMARK

Back to England again, and then on to Denmark to dance in Copenhagen as guest ballerina with the Royal Danish Ballet. Already plans are afoot for her to dance with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo for the 1955-6 season.

Recently there has been talk of Markova's retirement, she has even hinted of it herself. No doubt she will do so before many more years have elapsed, for you may be sure that she will eventually hang up her shoes whilst she is still at the pinnacle of her fame.

V.C.

The two photographs above were taken at the television performance of Alicia Markova and Erik Bruhn of the Royal Danish Ballet, in Giselle, Act II *on September 11th, 1955. The Ballet Rambert also took part in the programme.*

This was the first appearance in Europe of Markova and Bruhn, a partnership which took New York by storm when they first performed Giselle *together at the Metropolitan Opera House on May 1st this year. Bruhn had never previously danced* Albrecht *before, and it was Markova who taught him.*

Photos Mike Davis

★

On the right :—Markova as she appeared in the Mazurka *during the first tour of The Markova-Dolin Ballet in* 1935. *Our photographs therefore cover a span of* 20 *years in the life of Markova.*

Photo :—Gordon Anthony

MEN IN BALLET

Interview by SONIA ROBERTS

JOHN GILPIN

JOHN Gilpin's flashing smile and golden hair have made him a rival to Johnny Ray or Frankie Laine in the affections of many teen-agers, yet he remains calm in the face of admiring crowds at the stage door. "Time enough to worry when there are no more fans" is his remark as he wades through the nightly quota of scrapbooks and programmes to be signed.

Those who assume this attitude springs from vanity will soon be disillusioned by his conversation, far from discussing his own career John Gilpin prefers to speak about other dancers; of Roland Petit, with whose Ballet de Paris he danced in 1949, "a great man of the theatre, with a real flair for spectacle" and Jerome Robbins "the most exciting choreographer working today". John Gilpin can speak with authority on such matters, already he has devoted two thirds of his life to ballet.

He was born in Southsea, one of identical twins. His brother Tony had ambitions to be a concert pianist but eventually turned to theatre instead, and is now stage manager for Festival Ballet. John Gilpin's first lessons came from Tina Pearce in Southsea. When the family moved to Devon he won a number of medals in local competitions. He himself says that he made his decision to be a dancer at the age of eight.

However at that stage it seemed his ambitions were to be frustrated for he was small for his age. In 1939 he went to the Cone Ripman School where he remained for a number of years. During the war period he appeared in a number of films including *The Years Between* and *They were Sisters*. He also appeared in the legitimate theatre in *Peter Pan*, playing Michael, and had a number of radio parts. He regards this as a most valuable part of his training, and not only believes that ballet dancers should whenever possible have experience of other theatrical media, but that ballet training would greatly assist actors in their characterisations, and make for better movement on the stage in general.

At sixteen he had to make the choice between an important West End contract for a straight play and returning to the Rambert Ballet School. He had no doubt in his mind which offer to accept, and after three years at the school he became a soloist in the Rambert Company. It was during this period that he first partnered Belinda Wright, and he also had the unique experience of partnering Markova during his first *Giselle*.

Although he is now 5ft. 8 ins. in height, John Gilpin has great sympathy for the danseur who is called upon to partner a girl who overlooks him by inches. "It needs a dancer of the quality of Toni Lander or Beryl Grey to adjust themselves to such a handicap" he says "and it is an unfortunate fact that more tall girls seem to be entering the profession today".

After a short spell with the Marquis de Cuevas Grand Ballet, John Gilpin joined Festival Ballet in August 1950 and has remained with them ever since.

Among the roles he has created with the company have been The White Rabbit in *Alice in Wonderland* and the young man in black in *Symphony for Fun*, both ballets by Michael Charnley.

John Gilpin feels that Charnley is one of our potentially great choreographers and regrets that his work is often judged on the strength of *Alice in Wonderland*. This is not a favourite of Gilpin because he believes no work of so literary a nature is suitable for translation into another medium. In this connection John Gilpin believes many potential choreographers are lost because no-one these days has the money to gamble on an unknown quantity. He points out that while a painter or a musician can practise happily in a garret, a choreographer needs a full scale ballet company with which to test his skill. "It is a mistake" he says "to think of modern ballet as a specialised field. Most dancers with a reasonably developed technique can perform modern ballet with ease, and to think of ballet without the classics is to conceive music excluding Bach and Beethoven." However he is well aware that too great reverence can breed sterility. He thinks this is why companies run on a shoe-string often have greater artistic merit than those who can draw on state resources, and this is where major companies, existing outside the conventions and support of the state, like Festival Ballet, have a contribution to make.

For John Gilpin, the foundation of all ballet lies in the Russian school. "*Firebird*, as it was performed at Covent Garden recently, is my kind of ballet" he says. He is a frequent visitor to the performances of other companies for he believes this to be an important facet of a dancer's never-ending education, and one of his favourite relaxations is an evening at the opera.

In his opinion, the British school of dancing has greater sincerity and purity than any other in the world, but it needs frequent injections from other schools to keep it alive.

"The best teachers we have today are in America, and, if we can judge from what little we see on the films, in Soviet Russia". John Gilpin looks forward to the time when international relations allow a new generation of Russians to take the place of the diminishing circle of emigré teachers in London and Paris. "I should love to dance in Moscow" he admits.

Nevertheless he has great faith in the future of ballet in this country, although he feels it must be traditionally staged. "No arenas please" is his request. "Ballet demands the picture-frame stage for its illusion"

He believes that seeing ballet under unfavourable conditions, in concert halls and cinemas often does more harm than good in the matter of gaining a wider audience for ballet. For this reason he dislikes the Festival Hall. "The stage is too shallow and it is almost impossible to create the atmosphere of a theatre in the auditorium."

Although he finds the London public discerning and that of the Latin countries, with their preference for dramatic ballet as opposed to the lighter variety, very enthusiastic, the biggest bouquet goes to the Tynesiders of Newcastle and Sunderland, who apparently combine both these qualities. (Surely this is an unofficial pat on the back for the very active Newcastle ballet club).

Finally, when asked for his advice to any young man proposing to become a dancer he replied "I love my work and I wouldn't change it for anything else, but it is a profession where one can only be successful if one is prepared to sacrifice everything else." Then he grinned and added "Of course, its a short life, you know, even if I am lucky and healthy, I shall probably have to retire at 45."

Well at least that gives us another twenty years to enjoy his dancing.

Photograph on opposite page
John Gilpin in Nutcracker. *Photo : Mike Davis.*

Next Month: ANTON DOLIN

Full page of New Photographs

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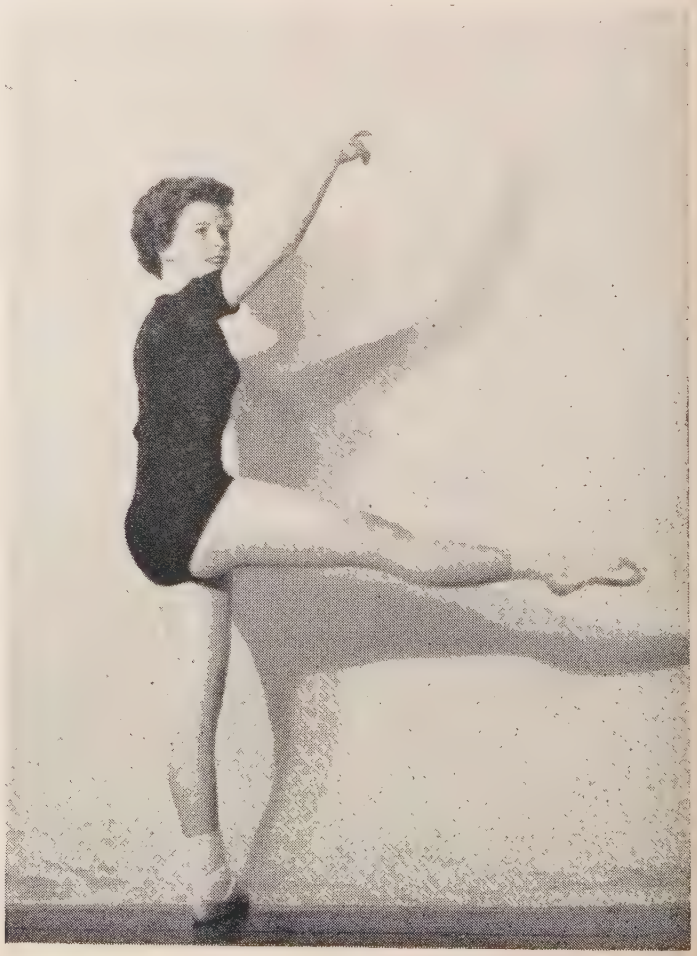
ROUND THE

HOW TO DEVELOP GRACE

VITALITY and poise are two opposite poles of the intricate art of ballet. To strike this exact combination is the dancer's aim, and it is a task that calls for unremitting practice and almost limitless perseverance. The pupil who advances even a little way along these lines will, however, derive great encouragement from observing that even physical beauty is less important than vitality and poise. A pleasing face and all that goes with the elusive thing we call 'beauty' *can* be acquired without undue physical effort. Very often it is nothing more than a matter of make-up and good grooming. But there is no substitute for ambition, nothing that can be bought to get out of *necessary* effort—and the long, arduous, patient work that goes into the making of a dancer will depend to a large extent upon the pupil's vitality.

"Of course we must understand clearly what we mean by vitality", says Jan Cieplinski. "A class bouncing with energy, executing their movements in an abrupt, exaggerated way, throwing their attitudes and arabesques grotesquely and making each kick the excuse for a display which is more acrobatic than graceful, can be anything but a pleasing sight. The aim in ballet is to achieve beauty, and this, at any rate in the training stages, will depend to a large extent upon the good taste of the teacher. A good teacher must be incessantly watchful, checking every fleeting movement, but that is not everything. He or she must be able to explain exactly how a movement or a position should be arrived at, and why. That is the science of ballet. When the stage of perfection has been reached, the movements will melt into one another with fluid poetry—but although the ordinary spectator will know nothing of the science underlying this poetry of motion, it is there all the same; or at least, let us say, it is there if the dancer

Développé



ELISABETHE CORATHIEL
Interviews Jan Cieplinski, the eminent Polish maître de ballet

has been taught by a scientific system".

Unfortunately, there is still so much confusion in ballet that very few are able to bring to it his scientific approach. Take, for instance, développé. How many of the professors now teaching ballet can explain exactly how développé should be executed ? Being able to dance has really very little to do with it; some of the best dancers have made very indifferent teachers !

DÉVELOPPÉ

In développé, according to the Italian system, there are four varieties, says Jan Cieplinski.

(*a*) Développé à plat (développé with the foot planted firmly on the ground)
(*b*) Développé sur demi-point (développé on half-toe)
(*c*) Développé sur les points (développé on points)
(*d*) Développé sauté (développé leaping)

Here is the basic method:

1. Raise the right arm to form one half of the 5th position. (Here correct balance is most important, because without it there can be no co-ordination between the working leg and the arm).

2. Now comes the preparation for développé—the retiré or withdrawing movement. The right foot is slowly raised to the side of the left knee.

3. Extend the foot very slowly to the 4th position en l'air devant, then retiré, back to the side of the left knee.

4. Now extend it again, to 2nd. position en l'air.

5. Once more back to the side of the knee; then extend to 4th position behind.

This is the pure Italian method, and its value lies in the fact that it gives the movements great fluency.

TEMPS LIÉ

Développé can be executed at the bar and in centre during class.

Another extremely useful series of exercises, for centre work, are known as *temps lié*. They are designed to improve the smoothness and balance of all ballet movements.

The sooner a student realises the importance of this, the better —and temps lié exercises can be started in the very earliest stages of ballet training.

For the elementary grade, of course, they must be made quite easy. It is fatal to attempt the more difficult accomplishments until sufficient balance and muscular control has been acquired. Therefore the first temps lié drill should be adapted to the pupil's gradual progress and, in the initial stage, executed 'en face' only. They should be done à terre, equal attention being given to 'en avant' and 'en arrière' movements. Later temps lié can be practised en face on points, 'en avant' and 'en arrière'.

The intermediate grade can proceed to temps lié in all directions, lifting the legs to an angle of 90 degrees. Temps lié on points will follow, en face, effacé, croisé, devant et avant, derrière.

Really advanced students can practise the more complicated temps lié movements, 'en tournant' and on points, till the culminating attainment, temps lié sauté (jumping) is reached.

Temps lié

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Dear Editor

EVERY week I receive many letters from readers congratulating me on the interest value and high standard of the contents of BALLET TODAY. These letters, are of course, a source of inspiration and great help. The greatest praise any writer can receive however is from another journalist, from a man or woman who knows the difficulties in producing a first class magazine under present-day conditions, putting the articles out in a modern journalistic style without cheapening the publication. Below we publish extracts from such letters. These are, indeed, a tribute.

France

Jean Coquelle—well known Parisian dance critic and journalist "The October BALLET TODAY is magnificent. When shall we have a French journal in that class ?"

Chile

Hans Ehrmann Ewart—Co-Editor of "Ballet" published in the Spanish Language "A. V. Coton will probably turn out to be the best acquisition you've made up to date. As far as I can see BALLET TODAY continues improving under your editorship".

America

Gordon Keith—Editor of Dancing Star—"I hope everything is going well for your fine magazine."

New Zealand

Keith Woods—Editor En Avant, Les Archives de la Danse "It is so rare for the major magazines of the world to take any interest in New Zealand. I should like to take this opportunity of congratulating you on BALLET TODAY. In particular I must praise your satirical articles, to some I cry touché, it is so easy to forget the past and praise too highly, or alternatively enhance the past and deride the present".

AND WE CRUSADE IN UTAH

Dear Editor,

I have read with considerable interest the account in the July issue of BALLET TODAY, of Miss Corathiel's interview with Mr. Jan Cieplinski, of whose work I have previously heard, and I was most pleased to hear his views on classical ballet instruction.

I am English and was trained with Phyllis Bedells and have since been with the Russian companies and was with Michel Fokine. I have been in this country for a number of years and am presently teaching at the University of Utah. I find it an awful job to make everybody here understand how very gradual they have to be in training young dancers. It was so encouraging to me to find your very timely article giving Mr. Cieplinski's admonitions and stressing extreme care in bringing on your dancers ! I have had copies made for the distribution among the young people here and I wish to thank you and Mr. Cieplinski for the help you have given me in my crusade to make widespread and popular in America, the real traditional classical ballet as we know and love it in Europe.

If I am able to realise my hope of returning to England for a visit in the next few days, I should consider it an honour to meet you and discuss the ballet.

Barbara Barrie,
Salt Lake City, Utah

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STOP PRESS: LORNA HILL will write new short story in December Ballet Today

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Our "Famous Ballerina Life Stories", have so far included Margot Fonteyn, Pts 1-3, Apr.-June, Alicia Markova, Pts. 1-4 Aug.-Nov. Copies are still available from BALLET TODAY, 15 Upper Brighton Road, Surbiton. Price 1/-. each. Post 3d. The next in this series is Galina Ulanova.

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BALLET GUIDE

NOVEMBER

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American Tour Dates

Washington	October 31st-November 3rd
San Francisco	November 9th-15th
Los Angeles	November 18th-27th
Detroit	December 1st-4th

Upon returning to New York the Company will rehearse for a television performance which takes place on December 12th.

Toronto	December 13th-15th

FESTIVAL BALLET TOUR

1 week commencing	31st Oct.	..	*Empire Theatre, Edinburgh*
1 week	„ 7th Nov.	..	*Empire Theatre, Sunderland*
1 week	„ 14th Nov.	..	*De Montfort Hall, Leicester*
1 week	„ 21st Nov.	..	*Theatre Royal, Hanley*
1 week	„ 28th Nov.	..	*New Theatre, Oxford*

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

ON TOUR

Week commencing	31st Oct.	..	*Theatre Royal, Glasgow*
„	„ 7th Nov.	..	*His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen*
„	„ 14th Nov.	..	*Gaumont Theatre, Dundee*
„	„ 21st Nov.	..	*Theatre Royal, Newcastle*
„	„ 28th Nov.	..	*Theatre Royal, Newcastle*
„	„ 5th Dec.	..	*Gaumont Theatre, Chester*
„	„ 12th Dec.	..	*To be announced*

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BOOKS

REVIEWED BY

PIGEON CROWLE

Show Business and the Law. By E. R. Hardy Iyamy, LL.B., PH.D. (Stevens, 25s.)

I cannot pretend to have any knowledge that would enable me to pass judgment on the statements made or the conclusions drawn in this book, but the distinguished qualifications of the author, who is a Member of the Middle Temple, a Barrister-at-Law, and a Lecturer in Laws at University College, London, and the high repute of his publishers who specialise in legal books, are sufficient guarantee of the work.

This handy book embraces the whole field of entertainment, explaining simply and straightforwardly the law as it affects theatres and theatrical shows, cinemas and film-making, circuses and performing animals, T.V. and radio. Commencing with the birth of a show, the chapters proceed from the script, through the engagement of the cast, to the performance, and end with a statement of the responsibilities of the management. It should save much argument and point the solution to disputes.

The Kabuki Theatre of Japan. By A. C. Scott (Allen & Unwin, 30s.)

How strange and beautiful is the art of the Kabuki theatre ! yet how incomprehensible to the spectator who comes to it without previous knowledge and experience, and whose reactions must be, perforce, almost entirely visual. The costumes are woven in the most splendid or fragile of stuffs, and the colours are rich and delicate, but never crude. Purples and golds are slashed with emerald green, embroidered with silver, and laced with scarlet or a blue as heavenly as the sky that hangs over Fujiama. But the warrior-hero, sitting impassive and immobile on his dais; or the lovely Tokuho Azuma, gliding with a dipping movement, partially turned-in and one small foot placed directly in front of the other, are figures so remote they might be but decorations on screen or fan. Impassioned but strangled cries issue from his lips; she turns her head with an inscrutable melancholy, and grave sideways sweep of the eyes: what does it all mean ?—for it is a fantastic world that is alien from that of the western theatre and has little affinity with the dances of India.

A. C. Scott has lived and worked for two years with the people of the Kabuki theatre and his scholarly work is a complete exposition of their complex art. It is well illustrated with drawings by the author and photographs taken in the theatre. There is a glossary of twenty pages in which the Japanese technical terms for which there is no exact translation are explained in great detail, and there are chapters on the actor's techniques, music, and historic background. For this drama is three hundred years old and has elements that are very much older. The little themes and dances we watched on the Covent Garden stage are but interludes or embellishments in plays that might last from one to three days. The dress is changed, exaggerated, or varied to express physical or emotional alterations in a personality. The lowering of one sleeve may symbolise a state of excitement; of two, that the character is severely wounded; the manner in which a fan is carried has a variety of interpretations. These kind of symbolic meanings induce a change of mood and stage atmosphere that is recognised by the audience and to which it immediately responds. But the Kabuki drama is concerned with no particular message and is, above everything, entertainment, in which fact and fantasy are inextricably mingled, and logic and realism ignored. This book will open the doors to the fairyland of the Japanese theatre.

The Children's Picture Book of Ballet. By Felicity Gray (Phoenix House, 6s. 6d.)

This little book tells in brief outline something of the story of ballet from its early days to the present time; there are sections on ballet in practice as well as theory; and the differences between dancing for boys and for girls are explained. But the chief feature is the many illustrations from old prints, well-known paintings, and photographs which are skilfully linked with the text. The writing has that sprightly clarity that we have learnt to expect from the creator of the popular television series, *Ballet for Beginners*, and the author of the book of that name, but there is a certain talking-down to her young readers in this book which I do not remember in the previous one.

The Royal Danish Ballet. By Svend Kragh-Jacobsen. (A. & C. Black. 10s. 6d.)

This is another slim book but packed with interest. The first visit of the Danish ballet to this country in 1953 was the chief event of the year. The sincerity and enthusiasm of its artists, their sheer dance quality and exceptional mime made a deep impression, and not the least of their attributes was their style—possibly the purest form of the French classical tradition to be seen today—and their careful preservation of the ballets of the Romantic era. Their latest visit—to the Edinburgh Festival this year—has been equally successful yet the general public has but the sketchiest notion of the history of this unique company, while the student has found any detailed account in English most difficult to come by. This book, written by the dramatic critic of the *Berlingske Tidende*, and with a foreword by Arnold Haskell, will please everybody, though one could wish for still more elaboration of the fascinating story. This describes the development of the ballet from the time, in 1579, when a troupe of travelling English dancers and jugglers was engaged to entertain Frederick II and his court. August Bournonville, trained at the French *Academie de la Danse* and the pupil of Vestris, gave the company their direct link with the French classical tradition. For almost a century and right up until 1930, the ballet in Denmark was impregnated with the style of dancing and the type of repertoire created by Bournonville during the fifty years of his regime. The time of new ideas that swept through Europe with the advent of Diaghilev, left this stronghold of tradition untouched. Harald Lander opened the door to modern trends in ballet and introduced the Russian style in the person of the famous teacher—so well known to dancers in this country—Vera Volkova. The work of many foreign choreographers such as Fokine, Massine, Lichine, Taras and Balanchine now enriches the repertoire. The latest, Frederick Ashton, by his acceptance of a long-standing invitation to create a ballet for them, has recognised the broadening and deepening effect that has resulted from the grafting of the Russian school.

The book is well-illustrated, and it is refreshing to find reproductions from old prints that are quite new to one. In particular I liked the gay and charming drawing of the *Pas de trois Cousines* (1849)—three coryphées from an English family settled in Denmark. The greatniece of one, Juliette Prince, and a dancer herself, became the model for the famous statue of the Little Mermaid, so well-known to visitors to Copenhagen.

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NEW RECORDS

From Grétry to Schoenberg

MAGALOFF completes his superb playing of Granados' *Goyescas* on Decca LXT 2900, with Nos. 5 and 6 on LW 5179. There is no question that he has got into the very heart of these beautiful piano pieces so often used by Spanish choreographers. You need have no hesitation in adding them to your collection.

Another excellent record, Capitol CTL 7096, includes Debussy's *Danses Sacrée et Profane*, Schoenberg's *Verklaerte Nacht*—Tudor's ballet, *Pillar of Fire*—and Ravel's *Introduction and Allegro*. The last, Howard used in her ballet, *The Mermaid*, for Ballet Rambert. It is definitely preferable to the London recording, MEL 94002, which though well played, is soulless and the string tone poor.

Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* has been choreographed many times—by Dolin in the late Twenties for the Nemchinova-Dolin Ballet, while probably the most recent is Descombey's ballet, *Frères Humains*. I think you will enjoy the rendering given by Katchen and Mantovani's Orchestra Decca LXT 5069—it tends to sweeping lyricism, which is more my cup of tea than the harsh brilliance it is so often given these days.

After the disappointment of Fistoulari's *Giselle*, it is nice to be able to recommend wholeheartedly his present disc, Parlophone PMD 1028, of the suite from *The Snow Maiden*—a favourite of the Sadler's Wells Opera at Christmas. There are plenty of opportunities in this colourful music and he accepts the challenge. *The Dance of the Tumblers* has dash and the recording is excellent.

A most remarkable recording is H.M.V.'s ALP 1251, of Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Weber* and Schoenberg's *Five Pieces for Orchestra*. Kubelik's renderings, particularly of Schoenberg's difficult score, are brilliant, and combined to show one what compass, realism and quality modern recording can attain. Balanchine used the Hindemith for his insect-cum-bird ballet in 1952. Although in its opening phases the movements were ugly, it had a general grandeur and excitement that made it exhilarating.

May O'Donnell's *Dance Concerto* is one of the finest of her ballets and is beautifully set to Bartok's *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*. This interesting work will certainly repay any effort that may be necessary to become better acquainted with it. There are two recent issues, Solti conducting with L.P.O. on Decca LXT 5059 and Byron with Los Angeles Chamber S.O. on Capitol CTL 7094. As good as the Americans are, the Hungarian understands his countryman and also the general quality of the tone is superior. The couplings may sway you but that apart, I have no hesitation in choosing the Decca record.

John Taras' first ballet, *Graziana*, inspired some truly great dancing from Ballet Theatre at its first performance. He cleverly moulded his ideas and choreography—both savouring strongly of Balanchine—to Mozart's *Third Violin Concerto, K.216*. Decca's recording, LXT 5044, is very clear but the performance is disappointing. Neither Christian Ferras nor the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra can coax one another beyond a routine affair.

The good humoured but sly music that Page chooses for her ballet, *Impromptu au Bois* is Ibert's *Divertissement*—originally composed as incidental music for the play, *The Italian Straw Hat*. Barbarolli gives a more robust interpretation, H.M.V.ALP 1244, than Desormière Decca LXT 2868, and although they are both good, the more delicate approach accentuates the wit.

The next three records which cover a wide field of ballet, will give enjoyment providing you are not over-critical. The serene *Ballet Suites* of Gluck and Grétry on Decca LXT 5063 are in contrast to Tchaikovsky's *First Piano Concerto*, H.M.V. CLP 1049, which Etcheverry choreographed for L'Opera Comique but the pianist, Gina Bachauer, has not quite the strength to give it all the brilliance it needs. The third record, H.M.V.ALP 1207, includes the *Pavane for a Dead Infanta*, *L'Apres-midi*, *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* and the second suite from *Tricorne*. Balletically, this is good value and, in a general sense, so are Cantelli's renderings.

Faure's *Nocturnes*, so enchantingly played by Kathleen Long and reviewed last January, can now be obtained on Medium Play, LW 5194. **B.C.**

Next Month:—

NEW RECORDS FOR CHRISTMAS

BALLET TODAY is published from 15 Upper Brighton Road, Surbiton, by I. E. Herf Tel.: ELMBRIDGE 9743 & 2607 Printed by Richard Madley Ltd., 54 Grafton Way, W.1, England. All unsigned material in BALLET TODAY is by the Editor whose opinion is not, of necessity, reflected in signed contributions by other writers

GERMANY

NEW FILMS

Mike Davis took these photographs on the set during the filming of Königswaltzer *the first Cinemascope film to be made in Germany.*

Right : Marianne Koch, seen here playing the leading part, was the German Academy Award winner of 1954.

Bottom left : Domini Callaghan (extreme right) and her husband Michel de Lutry (also seen here) were asked by the Bavarian Film Company to go to Germany to arrange the dance sequences and choreography for this film.

Bottom right : Lunchtime during the filming of Königswaltzer. *In the Canteen, and not at all impressed by the glamour, Mike Davis' small son (in the foreground) anxiously awaits his turn to be served.*

ALL THE STARS

Margot Fonteyn
Alicia Markova
Nadia Nerina
Svetlana Beriosova
Violetta Elvin
Elaine Fifield
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